



Fatality Alert 05-01

CY 04 Fatal Accidents



07 Dec 2004

Already this CY, seven FLW service members have died in accidents. All 7 have involved motor vehicles, which forcefully reminds us that POV accidents and POV-related accidents are our number one non-combat enemy. A quick analysis of these accidents reveals the major factors that we must focus on, to prevent more such accidents:

Pedestrian, 28 May 04 - A PV2 was struck by a vehicle and killed as he attempted to cross a highway at night. Factors included darkness, attempting to cross a busy highway at an unsafe location, inattention on the part of the soldier, and the fact that he was walking alone (no battle buddy).

POV, 22 Jun 04 - A SPC was in his vehicle, sitting at an interstate on-ramp in Illinois. A semi-tractor trailer swerved to avoid a lawn mowing tractor which had pulled onto the highway. The semi struck the soldier's POV, killing him. Primary factors were inattention by the operator of the lawn mowing equipment and by the driver of the semi and possible poor road design (blind spots).

POV, 23 Jul 04 - A CPL was driving his vehicle on I-44, at approximately 0130. The vehicle left the road, went down an embankment, and overturned. Both he and his passenger were ejected and killed. Factors include failure to wear seat belts and probable fatigue (he apparently fell asleep at the wheel).

POV, 16 Sep 04 - An SFC was operating her vehicle at a high rate of speed in Indiana. She lost control and went down an embankment. The vehicle overturned and burned. Factors include speed, unsafe passing (swerving onto the median to pass another vehicle), and failure to wear a seat belt.

Pedestrian, 29 Sep 04 - A PFC stopped his POV along I-44, near St. Robert, got out, and stepped in front of a semi-tractor trailer. He was killed when the semi struck him. The primary factor appears to be inattention by the PFC.

POV Motorcycle, 12 Nov 04 - A PFC was operating his dirt bike on an off-road vehicle track in Missouri. As he attempted to make a jump on a sand berm, the bike apparently struck a rock, causing it to flip. The result was that he came down headfirst, and the bike landed on his head, causing fatal injuries. Apparent factors were the environment (the rock), overconfidence, and lack of formal motorcycle training.

POV, 12 Nov 04 - A LT was operating his vehicle in Pennsylvania, having just completed training at Fort Leonard Wood. After apparently driving all night, his vehicle left the road and struck a tree. Apparent factor was falling asleep at the wheel.

The Big 5 factors involved in POV accidents continue to be: inattention, speed, fatigue, alcohol, and failure to wear seat belts. You can sum it all up as failure to follow standards and failure to use good judgment. For pedestrian accidents, the primary factors are similar: inattention and poor judgment.

To prevent such accidents, all personnel must exercise personal responsibility - follow all safe driving rules, stay attentive in all situations, use good judgment, and don't take unnecessary risks. Realize that your actions affect more than just yourself and that one wrong action as a POV operator or pedestrian can result in a fatality.

Leaders must know their personnel and help them to identify potential hazards associated with their off-duty plans and to establish accident prevention measures. Stress personal responsibility and safety awareness.

MANSCEN SAFETY OFFICE

Commanders must make maximum use of the 40 POV accident prevention tools available in the